

THE CABINET;

A REPOSITORY OF

POLITE LITERATURE.

No. IX.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1811.

MISCELLANY.

—
ORIGINAL.

THE PERIPATETIC.—No. 4.

Active in indolence, abroad we roam,
In search of happiness, which dwells at home.

ELPHINSTON.

It was a principle taught in the Peripatetic school, that nature abhors a vacuum, and it may with great force be applied to the human intellect, which unfortunately, will embrace any thing however criminal, rather than remain in absolute inactivity.

“My good madam,” said the excellent Jeremy Taylor to an indulgent mother, “if you do not fill your child’s head with something, believe me the devil will.” Pity is it, that children of a larger growth are not more aware of this truth, and that, indulging in the active indolence which seeks in the world abroad, objects merely of present gratification, they should omit laying up such intellectual treasures, as will well supply the expenses of that period, when the

pleasures of sense can afford but little support, and the mind will be almost wholly dependant on the funds it has acquired by early industry.

Nothing is more important than the acquisition of such resources, for many a day will arrive in the progress of life when the sunshine of expectation may be obscured, and the rays of worldly friendship absorbed, by the clouds of disappointment, error or misfortune.

The labours of learning have been employed in vain for a great majority of mankind. The petty interests of fashionable life, the momentary delights of luxury and the evanescent transports of sensual enjoyment, engross so much of the time allotted us for more noble exertions, that few men prepare their minds by studious perseverance for those latter days, when old age requires other support, than can be afforded by the ordinary observation of life's dull and uniform routine.

From him whose avocations require attention to business, much active studiousness cannot be expected, but there are none who cannot find moments of leisure to devote to reading, and it must create astonishment that any should be so blind to the means of happiness, as to suffer all their attention to be occupied by the grosser incitements of worldly gaiety, when literature has provided such ample funds for superior enjoyments. We have already hazarded the assertion, that there are more general readers in this country than can be found in any nation of equal population on the other side of the Atlantic, and the highest gratification must be derived from the knowledge that institutions are daily increasing which will more widely diffuse the lights of literature.

The Athenæum in this town presents an invitation to a literary banquet, which one would suppose could hardly be resisted. Within a very short period, this library has been

swelled into an importance which has surpassed the most sanguine expectations of its founders, and the report of its magnitude will excite astonishment in the minds of those Europeans, whose contemptuous opinions of American literature have been so frequently and perniciously advanced. But while munificence has thus provided a source of unfailing amusement to our inhabitants it is a cause of surprise that a greater number than now visit the Athenæum, do not avail themselves of the advantages it presents. We can assign no other cause for this partial neglect, than the omission on the part of its conductors to publish the claims of the institution to more general attention. The rapidity with which it has emerged from comparative insignificance, is probably unknown to very many who would gladly share in the advantages it affords. Convinced of its importance, we shall shortly present to our readers an account of this literary association, which we doubt not will be novel to many who are merely acquainted with the name without being acquainted with the principles of the institution.

Y.

MAZEPA :

Hetman of the Ukraine.

On Wednesday evening a tragedy in five acts, bearing the above title, and written by a gentleman residing in this town, was performed for the first time. The characters of the play were thus represented.

Mazepa,	- - - - -	Mr. Duff
Kramola,	- - - - -	Mr. Entwisle
Dobrinia,	- - - - -	Mr. Robertson
Zerga,	- - - - -	Mr. Darley
Morano,	- - - - -	Mr. Vaughan
Adolphus,	- - - - -	Mr. Fisher
General,	- - - - -	Mr. Roberts
Guards, Officers, Soldiers, &c.		
Elizabeth,	- - - - -	Mrs. Darley
Chloira,	- - - - -	Mrs. Powell

Fable

prison, comes to him in the disguise of a friar, and informs him of the danger which threatens him; that the Czar having information of his intended movement, had with great subtlety invited him to his camp, and that a body of troops were on their march to seize upon his person. In this dilemma, Mazepa, is induced to fly to Charles; and leave *Kramola* to fill his situation and further his views. But no sooner is he departed than *Kramola* seizes the occasion to threaten the Council with the vengeance of Peter, if they dare any longer to maintain the cause of *Mazepa*, whom he denounces as a traitor to his prince. The Council immediately dissolve.

An opportunity is now afforded for *Kramola* to effect his designs upon *Elizabeth*, who had invariably viewed him with suspicion and disgust. He endeavours to persuade her of the falsehood of her husband, and brings *Chloira* forward to convince her of his perfidy. The resolution of *Chloira*, however, though it had been previously stimulated by *Kramola*, yet, when put to the test in the presence of her cousin *Elizabeth*, fails in maintaining the falsehood. And the compunctions of conscience in *Chloira*, serves only to enrage the passions of *Kramola* the more, and he orders them both into confinement. The approaching battle now calls *Kramola* into the field with all his troops, and in the moment, *Morano* and *Doibrinia* push forward through the few remaining guards, and rescue both *Elizabeth* and *Chloira* from their confinement, and carry them to a place of safety in the forest.

The battle of Pultowa, proving unsuccessful to Charles, *Kramola* is confirmed in the Hetmanship, and pursues the life of Mazepa, with unabated perseverance and ardour. Mazepa, on the other hand, provoked to the last state of desperation, at the misfortune of the battle, and the treachery of his friend, is only prevented from suicide by *Dobrinia*, who appears before him, and offers to conduct him to Elizabeth. They are pursued by the soldiery, and *Dobrinia* is mortally wounded; Mazepa while lamenting his death, suddenly finds himself alone with *Kramola* "in single opposition, man to man;" but this wretch, equally destitute of courage, as of honesty, shrinks within himself, and

with base fears, seems to implore the compassion of *Mazepa*, who disdains to touch him ; when suddenly upon the reappearance of his soldiers, the villain draws his sword, and *Mazepa* dispatches him without difficulty or compunction. The soldiers overawed by respect to their former Hetman suffer him to pass off unmolested.

The other villain *Zerga*, had in the mean time found out the concealment of Elizabeth, and is prevented from gratifying his hatred of *Mazepa* by the abuse of her person, only by the return of *Mazepa* himself, who fights, conquers, wounds him, and leaves him for dead upon the earth. But the snake was only "*scotched not killed* ;" and he is soon able to rise, and is endeavouring to reach some military post to give information of *Mazepa's* place of concealment ; but is prevented by *Chloira*, who enters at this moment and forcibly withholds him from proceeding. Exhausted by the struggle *Zerga* sinks upon the ground, and calls piteously for water. All the woman rises in *Chloira's* breast at this appeal,

"Forgot were hatred wrongs and fears
The plaintive voice alone she hears
Sees but the dying man,"

and she proceeds to seek for some, to alleviate his dying hour. But in the interval some soldiers make their appearance to whom *Zerga* gives the information which he desires, and then dies with a convulsive laugh ; but, not before *Chloira* returning, discovers the developement, and flies to apprise *Mezepa* of his danger. She arrives however, too late to prevent his escape, and on attempting to save his life, he is wounded, and dies in the arms of *Elizabeth*. *Chloira* distracted falls into the arms of two soldiers, and the curtain falls.

MERIT.

FEMALE EDUCATION.

Continued from page 119.

A great many of the lesser and more obscure duties of life necessarily devolve upon the female sex. The arrangement of all household matters, and the care of children in their early infancy,

must of course depend upon them. Now there is a very general notion that the moment you put the education of women upon a better footing than is at present, at that moment there will be an end of all domestic economy, and that, if you once suffer women to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will very soon be reduced to the same kind of aërial and unsatisfactory diet. These, and all such opinions, are referable to one great and common cause of error;—that man does every thing, and that nature does nothing; and that every thing we see is referable to positive institution rather than to original feeling. Can any thing, for example, be more perfectly absurd than to suppose, that the care and perpetual solicitude which a mother feels to her children, depends upon her ignorance of Greek and mathematics, and that she would desert an infant for a quadratic equation? We seem to imagine that we can break in pieces the solemn institution of nature, by the little laws of a boarding school; and the existence of the human race depends upon teaching women a little more or a little less;—that Cimmerian ignorance can aid paternal affection, or the circle of arts and sciences produce its destruction. In the same manner we forget the principles upon which the love of order, arrangement, and all the arts of economy depend. They depend upon ignorance and idleness; but upon the poverty, confusion, and ruin which would ensue from neglecting them. Add to these principles the love of what is beautiful and magnificent, and the vanity of display;—and there can surely be no reasonable doubt, but that the order and economy of private life is amply secured from the perilous inroads of knowledge.

We would fain know, too, if knowledge is to produce such baneful effects upon the material and the household virtues, why this influence has not already been felt? Women are much better educated now than they were a century ago, but they are by no means less remarkable for attention to the arrangements of their household, or less inclined to discharge the offices of parental affection. It would be very easy to show that the same objections has been made at all times to every improvement in the education of both sexes, and all ranks—and been as uniformly and completely refuted by experience. A great part of the objections made to the

education of women, are rather objections made to human nature, than to the female sex : for it is surely true that the knowledge, where it produces any bad effects at all, does as much mischief to one sex as the other, and gives birth to fully as much arrogance, inattention to common affairs, and eccentricity among men, as it does among women. But it by no means follows, that you get rid of vanity and self-conceit, because you get rid of learning. Self-complacency can never want an excuse ; and the best way to make it more tolerable, and more useful, is to give to it as high, and as dignified an object as possible. But at all events it is unfair to bring forward against a part of the world an objection which is equally powerful against the whole. When foolish women think they have any distinction, they are apt to be proud of it, so are foolish men. But we appeal to any one who has lived with cultivated persons of either sex, whether he has not witnessed as much pedantry, as much wrong-headedness, as much arrogance, and certainly a great deal more rudeness, produced by learning in men than in women ; therefore, we should make the accusation general, or dismiss it altogether ; though, with respect to pedantry, the learned are certainly a little unfortunate ; that so very emphatic a word which is occasionally applicable to all men embarked eagerly in any pursuit, should be reserved exclusively for them : for, as pedantry is an ostentatious obtrusion of knowledge, in which those who hear us cannot sympathize, it is a fault of which soldiers, sailors, sportsmen, gamesters, cultivators, and all men engaged in a particular occupation, are quite as guilty as scholars ; but they have the good fortune to have the vice only of pedantry,—while scholars have both the vice and the name for it too.

Some persons are apt to contrast the acquisition of important knowledge with what they call simple pleasures ; and deem it more becoming that a woman should educate flowers, make friendships with birds, and pick up plants, than enter into more difficult and fatiguing studies. If a woman has no taste and genius for higher occupations, let her engage in these to be sure, rather than remain destitute of any pursuit. But why are we necessarily to doom a girl, whatever be her taste or her capacity, to

one unvaried line of petty and frivolous occupation? If she is full of strong sense, and elevated curiosity, can there be any reason why she should be diluted and enfeebled down to a mere culler of simples, and fancier of birds? why books of history and reasoning are to be torn out of her hand, and why she is to be sent, like a butterfly, to hover over the idle flowers of the field? Such amusements are innocent to those whom they can occupy; but they are not innocent to those who have too powerful understandings to be occupied by them. Light broths and fruits are innocent food only to weak or infant stomachs; but they are poison to that organ in its perfect and mature state. But the great charm appears to be in the word *simplicity*—simple pleasures! If by a simple pleasure is meant an innocent pleasure, the observation is best answered by showing, that the pleasure which results from the acquisition of important knowledge is quite as innocent as any pleasure whatever; but if by a pleasure is meant, one, the cause of which can be easily analyzed, or which does not last long, or which in itself is very faint; then simple pleasures seem to be very nearly synonymous with small pleasures; and if the simplicity were to be a little increased, the pleasures would vanish altogether.

As it is impossible that every man should have industry or activity sufficient to avail himself of the advantages of education, it is natural that men who are ignorant themselves, should view with some degree of jealousy and alarm any proposal for improving the education of women. But such men may depend upon it, however the system of female education may be exalted, that there will never be wanting a due proportion of failure; and that after parents, guardians, and preceptors have done all in their power to make every body wise, there will still be a plentiful supply of women who have taken special care to remain otherwise; and they may rest assured, if the great extinction of ignorance and folly is the evil they dread, that their interests will always be effectually protected, in spite of every exertion to the contrary.

We must in candour allow, that those women who begin, will probably have something more to overcome than may probably hereafter be the case. We cannot deny the jealousy which exists among pompous and foolish men, respecting the education of women. There is a class of pedants, who would be cut short in

the estimation of the world a whole cubit, if it were generally known that a young lady of eighteen could be taught to decline the tenses of the middle voice, or acquaint herself with the Æolic varieties of that celebrated language. Then women have, of course, all ignorant men for enemies to their instruction, who being bound (as they think) in point of sex, to know more, are not well pleased in point of fact to know less. But among men of sense and liberal politeness, a woman, who has successfully cultivated her mind, without diminishing the gentleness and propriety of her manners, is always sure to meet with a respect and attention bordering upon enthusiasm.

MAZEPA.

For the Cabinet

MAZEPA, or the Hetman of the Ukraine, was represented last night for the second time to an approving and applauding audience. It takes rank as an historical tragedy, though the name of the hero is almost the only part of the piece for which history is entitled to credit. The invention of the fable is altogether original, and the potency of the plot, which spell-bound the audience, is exclusively the merit of the writer. The play underwent some changes in its second appearance. The extreme difficulty of making the interest survive the hero of the drama had induced the author to end "Mazepa" at once in life and tragedy, and thus leave the audience under the deepening impression of this "*doubly dying*." It succeeded; and the only regret felt by the company at the alteration was the loss of the pleasure, "excited and refined," of witnessing, in Mrs. Powell's most impassioned manner, the repetition of the mad scene of Chloira, a portion of that admirable part, which she seemed to have studied with fidelity, and given with effect. The forces of the whole corps were never in more complete requisition. "Act well your part; there all the honour lies," seemed to be the injunction that the emulation among the performers made on each other. The *costuma* of the characters was in character and correct. Duff, in Mazepa, while he suited the word to the action, and the action to the word, did more; he suited the habiliment to both. We think this tragedy an attempt in a higher walk than any we have witnessed in

this town. Dignified tragedy in original blank verse is a stranger upon the Boston boards, and as a stranger we would give it the heartiest welcome. Such an attempt is surely "an enterprise of some pith and moment," well worthy public encouragement. In the depression of the times, perhaps, the only comfort for the people is the joy of grief, and this we hope they will generally experience in witnessing a scene of fiction, calculated to excite it to an exquisite degree. Much pains are necessarily expended by the managers and company in setting up a new piece. These should not be labours in vain. They should not find the taste they would cater for extinct. They have some right to hope, that the distress of men's business, will not come home to their bosoms, but that, at scenes which are "to raise the genius and to mend the heart," their feelings may still be indulged.

March 10th.

W.

COLLECTANEA.

PREMATURE INTELLECT.

BISHOP HALL, a divine, in the reign of Charles I. from his sententious manner of writing, has been styled the Christian Seneca. The following are favourable specimens of his style.

Upon the Sight of a Tree full-blossomed.

HERE is a tree overlaid with blossoms; it is not possible that all these should prosper; one of them must needs rob the other of moisture and growth; I do not love to see an infancy over hopeful; in these pregnant beginnings one faculty starves another, and at last leaves the mind sapless and barren; as therefore we are wont to pull off some of the too frequent blossoms, that the rest may thrive; so, it is good wisdom to moderate the early excess of the parts, or progress of over-forward childhood. Neither is it otherwise in our Christian profession; a sudden and lavish ostentation of grace may fill the eye with wonder, and the mouth with talk, but will not at the last fill the lap with fruit.

Let me not promise too much, nor raise too high expectations of my undertakings ; I had rather men should complain of my small hopes, than of my short performances.

Upon the Sight of two Snails.

THERE is much variety even in creatures of the same kind. See there, two snails ; one hath an house, the other wants it ; yet both are snails, and it is a question whether case is the better : that which hath an house hath more shelter, but that which wants it hath more freedom ; the privilege of that cover is but a burthen ; you see if it hath but a stone to climb over, with what stress it draws up that beneficial load ; and if the passage prove strait, finds no entrance ; whereas the empty Snail makes no difference of way. Surely, it is always an ease and sometimes an happiness to have nothing ; no man is so worthy of envy as he that can be cheerful in want.

Upon the Sight of an Owl in the Twilight.

WHAT a strange melancholic life doth this creature lead ; to hide her head all the day long in an ivy bush, and at night, when all other birds are at rest, to fly abroad, and vent her harsh notes. I know not why the ancients have *sacred* this bird to wisdom, except it be for her safe closeness, and singular perspicuity ; that when other domestical and airy creatures are blind, she only hath inward light, to discern the least objects for her own advantage. Surely thus much wit they have taught us in her ; that he is the wisest man that would have least to do with the multitude ; that no life is so safe as the obscure ; that no retiredness, if it have less comfort, yet less danger and vexation ; lastly, that he is truly wise who sees by a light of his own, when the rest of the world sit in an ignorant and confused darkness, unable to apprehend any truth, save by the helps of an outward illumination.

Had this fowl come forth in the day time, how had all the little birds flocked wondering about her, to see her uncouth visage, to hear her untuned notes ; she likes her estate never the worse, but pleaseth herself in her own quiet reservedness ; it is

not for a wise man to be much affected with the censures of the rude and unskilful vulgar, but to hold fast unto his own well chosen and well-fixed resolutions; every fool knows what is wont to be done; but what is best to be done, is known only to the wise.

Upon Moats in the Sun.

How these little moats move up and down in the sun, and never rest, whereas the great mountains stand ever still, and move not but with an earthquake; even so light and busy spirits are in continual agitation, to little purpose; while great deep wits sit still, and stir not, but upon extreme occasions: were the motion of these little atoms as useful as it is restless, I had rather be a moat than a mountain.

Which are the most rare animals in nature?

A rich man contented with his fortune. A man distinguished by genius, and not also distinguished by defects. A courtier grown old. A learned man who knows himself. A sciolist not puffed up with the vanity of learning. A virgin who is beautiful to every body but herself.

GENERAL OTWAY.

GENERAL OTWAY had been many years in the army with the rank of Colonel, and during that period many junior Colonels got preferment over his head. His friends frequently entreated him to state his services, and petition the King; which he at length consented to, and the chaplain of the regiment he served in was appointed to draw it up. When the Colonel perused it, he found it concluded with the words, "and your petitioner shall ever pray;" on which he told the chaplain he had made a mistake, and supposed that he was writing a petition for himself; and concluded with insisting that the word *pray*, being unfit for an officer, should be expunged. It was in vain that he was told, such was the form of all petitions; he would not

give up his opinion, but insisted that it should run—"and your petitioner shall ever *fight*."

This petition he presented to the late King (George II.) who, pleased with the novelty of the conclusion, and the honest bluntness of the officer, gave him a regiment a few weeks after, contrary to the advice of the minister, who had promised it to a person who had considerable parliamentary interest.

THE settled aversion Dr. Johnson felt towards an infidel, he expressed to all ranks, and at all times ; without the smallest reserve :—For though on common occasions he paid great deference to birth or title, yet his regard for truth and virtue never gave way to meaner considerations. He talked of a wit one evening, who somebody praised. "Let us never," said he, "praise talents so ill employed, Sir. We foul our mouths by commending such infidels." Allow him the *lumières* at least, intreated one of the company. "I do allow him, Sir," replied Johnson, "just enough to light him to hell."

The following poetical effusion, from the pen of Darwin, possesses all the brilliancy and high furnished characteristics of the author's fancy.

TO MAY.

BORN in yon blaze of orient sky,
Sweet May! thy radiant form unfold;
Unclose thy blue voluptuous eye,
And wave thy shadowy locks of gold.
For Thee the fragrant zephyrs blow,
For Thee descends the sunny shower,
The rills in softer murmurs flow,
And brighter blossoms gem the bower.
Light Graces, drest in flowery wreaths,
And tiptoe Joys their hands combine;
And Love his sweet contagion breathes,
And, laughing, dances round thy shrine.
Warm with new life the glittering throngs,
On quivering fin and rustling wing,
Delighted join their votive songs,
And hail thee, Goddess of the Spring.

POETRY.

GENIUS.—BY M. SAVORY.

"On you tall rock's projecting side,
See where the stripling bends his way,
To hang with rapture o'er the tide,
And tune a sweetly rustic lay.

"Say, what in sportive youth can move
To dwell on nature's varied hue?
What bids his bosom glow with love
And bathes his azure eye in dew?

"What bids him hail the matin strain,
As morn's first blush illumines the vale;
And wake at midnight hour again,
To listen to the nightingale?

"O Genius! 'twas thy strong control,
As o'er his cradle, from on high,
Thou wav'd thy magnet o'er his soul,
And on his lips breath'd harmony.

"Thy magic touch bade fancy rove,
As mind its early charms displayed;
Bade Shakspeare ev'ry passion move,
And Homer on his pillow laid.

"Thou gav'st that fine perceptive sense,
Which throws o'er ev'ry scene its charm;
To joy, will brighter joy dispense,
To grief, more exquisite alarm.

"Ah! dang'rous gift, where bliss appears
But as the morn's first vivid ray,
And grief her mournful aspect rears
Through the long, ling'ring, weary day!

"Yet Siren Genius! still to thee
Thy captive pours the grateful strain,
To thee he bends the willing knee,
With all thy joys, with all thy pain.

"Would Alwin that pure sense forego,
In tranquil apathy to rove?

"Ah! no," he cries, "with all thy woe,
O stay and charm me with thy love!"